



A  
**SHORT EXPOSITION**  
*on of the 20. and 21. verses*  
of the third Chapter of the first  
*Epistle of S. Iohn.*

**CONTAINING A VERY PRO-**  
*fitable discourse of conscience, and of all the actions,*  
*sortes, and kinds thereof, wherby euery man may*  
*easily know his estate, wherein hee standeth in the sight of*  
*his God, and whether his conscience be good or euill, with*  
*all things also belonging either to get a good conscience,*  
*or else to releue it out of trouble, being griued and woun-*  
*ded, as in the epistle to the reader is more specially*  
*mentioned, and in the discourse it selfe*  
*clearly expressed.*

PROV. 15. verse 15.  
*A good conscience is a continuall feast.*



EDINBURGH.  
**PRINTED BY ROBERT WAL-**  
*degrauē, Printer to the Kings Maiestie.*

Anno Dom. 1600.

*Cum privilegio Regiō.*





TO THE READER.



*Lbeit the dulnesse of  
this time be such, (gen-  
tle Reader in the Lord)  
that it rather mooueth  
manie to content them-  
selues with other mens writings, then to  
take paines, to write for the profite of any  
thing themselves: yet such is the zeale of  
some, that they cannot suffer men to sleep  
in the danger of sinne to their owne de-  
struction, but wil (if it be possible) awake  
them, & let them know the deadly dan-  
ger wherein they stand, which is a thing  
most needful, although it be neyther plau-  
sible to the worlde nor acceptable to the  
flesh: for who is he that seeth not the se-  
curity of the world in this age, the con-  
tempt of God and of his word, and doth  
not sorrow at the heart for it. And see-  
ing it is not possible, that any can truely  
sorrow, and sit still and say nothing, espe-  
cially, when he perceaueth the moste part  
of all this blind age, by the craft of Sa-  
than, cast into a deadly sleepe of damna-  
ble security. So that they neither care for  
the true knowledge of God, while they*

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are young; nor think that they stand in  
 neede of it being olde, but spend, or rather  
 mispend all their time in the vaine cares  
 and pleasures of this transitorie world,  
 without heedfull care vnto their cal-  
 lings, or giuing eare vnto their consci-  
 ence when the same accuseth them, con-  
 victeth them, and condemneth them  
 before God, as guiltie of infinite things,  
 whereof one day they must giue an exact  
 accounte, and at his handes receaue the  
 wages of eternall death for their works,  
 unlesse they awake, while time is, truelie  
 repent them of their former security, &  
 trye al their actions, thoughts, words &  
 deedes, by euery mans conscience, the  
 which the Lord hath giuen him, both to  
 be vnto him witnesse and iudge of the  
 same. And therefore, to the ende that al  
 men may doe this the better, to whose  
 hearing or reading this discourse shall  
 come. I haue thought it good, being moo-  
 ued in my conscience, to write this trea-  
 tise therof. Wherby eueryman may know  
 his owne estate, and his God, as he hath

re.



TO THE READER.

revealed himselfe in his worde to the worlde. Both the which points (saith Bernard) are aboue all things necessary for all men that desire to escape hell, and come to heauen. For as of the knowledge of thy selfe, commeth the feare of God, & of the knowledge of God, the loue of God; so of the ignorance of thy selfe, commeth pride, and of the ignorance of God & of his word, desperation (saith he). Wherefore, whosoever will avoyde this deadlie dart of desperation in the ende, must not neglect the meanes which God hath appointed to escape it. That is, first to know his sins, and heare his conscience, when she accuseth or excuseth him according to the rule of Gods word. And next, to know the way of deliuerance from them. And that he take heed, that in seeking a salue for them, he be not deceaued therein for conscience being wounded with sin, is that thing that neither can bee healed with coulors of Retorick, with sweetnes of musick, with delicacie of daintie meates, with beawtie and pleasant sights, with  
mans

## TO THE READER.

mans inuentions, or else with any other thing except onely Christ, as he hath offered and revealed himselfe in the Scriptures, apprehended by faith, & receaued and kept with a good conscience, without the which, if any man liue & dye, it had bin farre better for him, that vwith Kain & Iudas he had neuer bin borne. Receaue therefore (gentle reader) this short discourse, wherein thou mayest see both what a thing conscience is, what an intollerable thing the grief & wound thereof is when it is troubled. What are all the actions, and offices of it in al men and women. What are the sorts & kinds thereof: what is mans duety touching it. How to get a good conscience, & keepe it being gotten: and lastly, how to relieue & helpe it being troubled, that it accuse and condemne vs not before our God, whose sentence when it accuseth, shall euer stand & condemne vs without reclamation before the Lord. But if not, then shall vve haue boldnes towards our God, to whom be glory for euer.



THE





1. IOHN CHAP. 3.

20 If our heart condemne vs, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloued, if our heart condemne vs not, then haue we boldnes toward God.



THE Apostle in these words doth teach vs that seeing the knowledge of God doth infinit degrees passe the vnderstanding of our harts or consciēce.

It must needs therfore follow, that none can stand before his holie maiesty, without the integritie of a pure and good conscience. In the testimonie whereof, consisteth all our comfort and reioycing saith Paul. 2, Cor. 1, 12.

In this place Iohn doth neither speak of the conscience of reprobates, who are past feeling, and giuen themselves to worke vncleanes euen with greedines. Neither yet of Hypocrites, who flattering themselves, doe boast them of their Ephes. 4, 19. Math. 9, 12.

## A. DISCOURSE

owne righteousness. But onely of them that haue their conscience drawn forth before the iudgement seate of God, by him to make them vnderstand and feele his anger and wrath against them, In respect of some sinnes, whereof their conscience dooth accuse them, that they should speedely turne vnto him, that he may heale them whoe hath wounded them.

Psal. 6. 3. &  
38. 3. & 51  
4. 1. Sam. 2

3 In the 21 verse, hee sheweth by the contrarie, how greate a treasure it is to men or womē, to haue euer the testimonie of a good conscience, for then (saith he) if the same accuse vs not, as guiltie of anie offence vnto our God, whereof we doe not from our heart repent vs, with assurance of pardon for Christ his sake, in whome we onely belecue to finde all that we stand in neede of. Then may we without feare, both approach with boldnes, and come before the throne & mercy seate of our God, call him our louing father, and assure our selues that he will be fauorable and mercifull vnto vs for his Christs sake, by whom we haue both boldnes and enterance with confidence by faith, through whome also we haue that

Rom. 5. 1,

Ephc. 3. 12



## O F C O N S C I E N C E.

that peace with him (sayth the Apostle) in our Conscience, that passeth all Treasures, yea all vnderstanding.

Not that anie mans conscience beareth him witness that he is without sinne: But because hee dooth acknowledge his sins, confesseth them to his God, repenteth him therof, beleueth in Christ, and submitteth himselfe and his will whollie to the will of his God, desiring aboue all things, euer to be ruled and gouerned thereby onely.

Of all this, I marke only here, what is the gaine of godlines, that is, of faith, & of a good conscience, even a promise to haue al things necessarie for this life, and likewise to enioy life everlasting, made by God himselfe in the scriptures, wherein also, and in this place especially, we finde the crueltie of sinne to bee so huge & weighty, that by no meanes that man can finde in himselfe, he shal euer be able to shake of the intollerabl burthē therof, that thereby at one time or another, his conscience shall not be fearefully wakened, greeued, and aboue all things burthened therewith, and not acknowledge that the wages thereof, is death everlasting

4  
Psal. 130.

3. & 143.  
2 Ezech.

18, 21  
Zach. 1. 3.

Math 11.  
28.

1. Tim. 4. 8  
The frute  
both of  
godlines &  
of sinne  
what

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uerlasting, both of bodie and soule. And therefore, they are farre deceaued, who flattering themselues in their sinnes, goe about to shift themselues from the sense and feeling of Gods wrath, and the testimonie of their own conscience, to accuse convict, and to condemne them before his tribunall seate for the same: of which sort, notwithstanding there hath bin in all ages an infinite number, who as the Prophet sayth: *Hath made a covenant*  
**Esa. 28. 15.** *with death, and are at agreement with Hell.* That albeit a scourge come, it shall not touch them, and that by reason of their shifts, their refuges, & their cloaks of falshood and vanitie, wherewith they suppose to couer their sinne from God. But all in vaine (saith the Lorde) for the scourge of wrath shal come, tredde them downe, and vtterlie consume them. And yet of this kind of people (saith the Lord)  
**1. The. 5. 3. 6.** *the world shal be full in the latter daies,* who when they shall looke for nothing but peace and safetie, then shall come vp on them vndoubtedly death and endles destruction, the which should learne vs not any longer to sleepe in sinne, and to contemne wholesome admonitions, as  
doth



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doth the moste part of all the worlde at this day, to their own losse and perpetuall destruction, but haistilie and with diligence to awake (as saith the Apostle) Ephes. 4. who hytherto haue without remorse of conscience and true repentance, slept in sinne, and filthie lustes of our flesh. The which at length, bringeth forth death both of bodie and soule, & therefore, he commandeth vs to ryse from the same by faith, repentance, and newnes of life. That by Christ we may receaue the light of life euerlasting, and the purging of our consciences, from dead works Heb. 9. 4. to serue the liuing God. The which as The deuision of this discourse is fourefolde, they are, eyther good or bad in all men and women. So am I minded, first to expresse and set downe the true definition of conscience. The which heare the Apostle calleth the *Heart* of man, & what a greefe it is to haue the same hurte, and wounded with sinne. Secondly, to shew what are the proper dueties and actions thereof in all persons. Thirdly, what are the kindes and diuersitie of consciences. And last, what bee the dueties of al men and women touching their owne consciences: how to preuent the troubles thereof,

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therof, and also how to relecue the same being troubled.

**1**  
 The heart of man what.  
 Mat. 6. 21  
 1. Pet. 3, 4.  
 Act. 4, 31.  
 1. Thef. 3.

Concerning the first, I finde this word *hearte* in the Scriptures, to haue diuerse significations, & therefore placed sometimes for the affections of the *hearte*, as *Where your treasure is, there will your hearte be also*. Sometimes for the whole soule of man: as, *Let the hid man of the heart be vncorrupt*. Some times for the will of man: as, *they were all of one heart*, that is, they were all of one minde, will or affection: and sometimes for mans conscience: as in that prayer which *Paull* maketh for the *Thessalonians*, praying, *that the Lorde shoulde make their heartes stable and vnblameable, in holinesse before God, at the comming of our Lorde Iesus Christ, &c.* That is, their conscience, as now in the words and text aboue specified. The Apostle Saint *Iohn*, vnderstandeth by the word *Heart*, the onely conscience of man.

**2**  
 The diuision of the parts of man in body & soule.

For as hee consisteth of two partes principallie, that is, of bodie & soule. So doth the soule consist of *vnderstanding* and *will*, albeit the soule hath no partes properly, but onely by analogie, and in respect



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respect of the diuerse objects and actions thereof: By reason whereof, the same is said to bee deuided into diuers parts, that is, into diuers powers or faculties.

The *vnderstanding*, is called that power or facultie of the soule, whereby we vse reason, which is the more principall part, seruing to rule and to order the whole man. And therefore it is placed in the soule, to guyde and gouerne the whole person. 3  
vnderstanding what

The *Wil*, is that facultie and power of the soule, whereby we do will or nill anie thing. That is, chuse or refuse it. 4  
Will what

With the *Wil* are ioyned certaine affections, as *Ioy*, *Sorrow*, *Loue*, *Hatred*, and sick-like, whereby wee doe eyther embrace or eschew that which is good or euill. 5  
Affections are ioyned with the will.

Now, because the workes and actions of conscience doe stand in the vse of reason, it is euident, that therefore it is not placed in the affections or willing part of the soule, but in the vnderstanding, which hath also two parts. 6  
Cōscience not placed in the willing facultie of the soule,

The first whereof is, that which standeth in the view and contemplation of the trueth or falshood of any thinge, and goeth 7  
Two parts of vnderstanding.

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*Theoricall* goeth no further . The second, is that  
 and which standeth in the view of euery par-  
*Practicall* ticular action, to search and seeke whe-  
 wherein ther the same bee good or euill . The  
 Conscience firste is called *Theoricall* , and the se-  
 is placed. conde *Practical* . Vnder the which  
 conscience is comprehended : because  
 her propertie is to iudge of the goodnes  
 or badnes of things or turnes done.

8

The defi-  
 nition of  
 Conscience  
*Tho. aquinas*  
*part, 1. que*  
*79. artic. 13*

So that of these premisses we haue to  
 vnderstand, that conscience is a parte of  
 the minde or vnderstanding in all reaso-  
 nable creatures: determining, iudgeing,  
 decerning , and giuing sentence of all  
 their particular actions, thoughts, words  
 or deedes, eyther with them or against  
 them.

9

Conscience  
 is not a  
 bare know-  
 ledge with  
 out works  
 of accu-  
 sing & ex-  
 cusing, &c

This definition of conscience doth shew,  
 that it is not a bare knowledge or iudg-  
 ment of the vnderstanding onely, but a  
 naturall power, facultie, or created qua-  
 litie: from whence iudgement & know-  
 ledge doe proceede as effects , This the  
 scriptures doe confirme , ascribing sun-  
 drie works and actions to conscience, as  
 accusing, excusing, comforting, terrifying  
 which could not proceede from thence,  
 if it were no more then an naked and  
 bare



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bare action or act of the minde.

Wherefore, it is that power of the soule whose propertie is to take the principall conclusions of the minde, and apply them either to accuse or excuse. So that this is the ground of all, that Conscience is a thing which can neuer bee lost, albeit the same may loose the vse for a time, as reason in a drunken man, for it is in all reasonable creatures both man and Angell, as in the proper subiects. Therefore all consciences that now doe sleepe, shall once be wakened, eyther in mercie, or in iudgement, heere or in hel: for the torment of an euill conscience in the wicked, is a worme (saith the Prophet) which shall neuer die, and a fire that shall neuer be quenched.

10  
As conscience is in all men & Angels so doth it apply al principles and conclusions of the minde, eyther to accuse or excuse them.

Esa. 66. 24

The ende of conscience is to determine of things done, whereby it differeth from all other gifts of the minde, as are intelligence, opinion, science, faith, prudence, &c. For as to intelligence, it simplie conceaueth a thing to be, or not be, opinion iudgeth a thing to be probable or contuigent. Science iudgeth it to be sure and certaine: faith is a perswasion, whereby we belecue things that are

11  
The ende of Conscience and wherein it differeth from other giftes and faculties of the mind.

not,

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not, but are hid from vs as yet, prudence discerneth what is meete to be done, or what to be left vndone. But Conscience goeth further then all these, for it giueth sentence of things done by saying vnto vs & shewing vs, this was done, this was not done. This may be done. This may not be done. This was well done. This was euill done.

12  
3. things to  
be marked

Of Conscience thus described, there doe arise three things to be marked.

1

Firste, that the things wherof Conscience determines, are a mans owne actions only: (for to be certaine what any other man hath done or said, is commonly called knowledge) but what a man himselfe hath done or said, belongeth to Conscience.

2

Secondly, Conscience meddles not with generals: but dealeth onely in particular actions, and that not in a few but in all.

3

Thirdly, that the maner of consciēce is a determination, to set downe her iudgement, either with the creature or against it, and that because it is of diuine nature placed by God in our soules, betweene him and vs, as an arbitrator to giue sentence,



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tence, and pronounce decreet, eyther with vs or against vs to God. For sometimes it consents and speaks with God, against persons in whome it is placed: & other times againe, it cōsents with them, and speaketh for them before the Lorde. Examples hereof, there bee manie in the Scriptures, as of the first sort, *Kain & Iudas*, and in the latter, *Peter and the Theefe*, who albeit their sinnes were greivous, because they repented, their Conscience assured them of mercie.

And this is the cause why we call this effect of our minde Conscience. For as *Scire*, to know, is of one man onely by himselfe. So is *Conscire*, when at the least two know some secret thing. The which they doe both knowe together. Wherefore, the name *Conscientia*, or conscience is that thing that maketh two together partakers or partners of the knowledge of things which are secret in the minde of men or Angels.

Now it is certaine, that in this knowledge with man of his secreete deedes & thoughts, no creatures can be partners with him (because neither men nor Angels doe know mans thoughts & secrets,

I 3  
Why the  
Practical  
parte of  
the vnder-  
standing is  
called con-  
science.

I 4  
God and  
man are  
partners  
onely in  
the know-  
ledge of  
conscience

B

vnlesse

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vnlesse the same be reuealed vnto them) and therefore it remaineth, that in the knowledge therof, conscience hath God onely to be partner with man in all his thoughts, words, and deeds, how secret soeuer they be: and man againe, by the gift of God, doth know the same of himselfe, together with God in his Conscience. And thus far concerning the word Conscience, and the definition thereof, The which heere Saint Iohn calleth the *hearte of man*.

2  
What a  
griefe is  
a troubled  
conscience  
Prouer. 18.  
14.

It followeth, to speake next of the greefe of a troubled Conscience, which of all others is most intollerable. For the spirit of man (saith *Salomon*) wil susteine his infirmitie, but a wounded spirite, who can beare it? That is, a troubled & a wounded conscience, is of al greefe the greatest, & the greeuousest punishment that God at any time layeth vpon either man or Angell. So that men to be ridde out of this tormēt, doe chuse oftentimes rather death, then to liue vnder the miserable and intollerable greife thereof, albeit in all other troubles, they be able to indure even vnto the ende therof, yet this onely is that griefe which they can

no



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no waies sustaine. As examples, both of prophane and diuine histories doe beare recorde. For whether we consider this grieffe in them who are meere naturall men, and neuer knewe God in Christ, or in them that are renewed by the holie Ghoste, and spirit of regeneration, wee shal finde it to bee in either of them, the greatest grieffe & torment of all others.

As to the first sorte, whether the same be heathen people, who neuer knewe Gods word, or else such as in true Religion did not rightly, but superstitiously worship God, wee shall perceauce if wee list to reade histories, that this wound of an accusing heart, and troubled spirite, coulde not bee healed with any medicine, or other comforte whatsoeuer.

For the hethen Philosophers, the wisest of all others among the Gentles, as *Cato* and others, who did beare all troubles most patiently, to the great admiration of all the world, did yet notwithstanding, where their consciences became troubled, and when some great distresse of minde wounded their heart and spirit, make an ende of their liues with their owne handes. Some by drinking deadlie poyson.

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poyson. Some by running themselves voluntarily, vpon the weapons of their enemies. Some by casting themselves from hie places vnto the deepe of the sea, or ouer high rocks, to beate and strike themselves all to peeces. And some not sticking to stogge themselves through the harts with swords, knyues, or other such weapons, for grieve of this wound of conscience, & trouble of heart, all the which persones, so long as other waies their consciences were not surcharged, & ouermastered, were in al bodilie troubles invincible, &c. As *Cato*, *Iasson* the husband of *Medea*, *Lucretia*, and others. As *Alexander* the greate and *Nero*, who would haue put hand to themselves for greefe of conscience.

4 The like we may beholde in persons, that either superstitiously worship God, as Papists, or yet in the common sort of people, that in mouth professe Christ, but yet in works doe deny him, who are all cast into the spirite of slumbering, numnes or hardnes of hart, who hearing, hear not, nor seeing cannot perceauie, but are senseles and blockish, vnto the time that God doth loose the brydle of their conscience



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scinces, and setteth before them their sinnes committed, and the punishment due vnto them. Then may we see in many of them, how grieuously they are tormented, and what sorrowfull ends they doe make, while some of them doe hang themselves. Some drowne themselves. Some cutte their owne throtes, & some of them doe stogge themselves to the hearts, with knives, daggers, or swordes: And all to rid themselves out of the intollerable and feareful grieffe of conscience, as they doe falsly suppose, vnto whome *Iudas* and *Kain*, are fearefull patrons and teachers. As to that wicked Spaniard *Alphonso* who when he could not by any meanes dissuade his brother *Diasius* by faire meanes from the profession of the gospel, to embrace Papistrie, hee cruellie murthered him. And therefore grieued in Conscience, there after did hang himselfe at the councel of *Trent*. The like also did *Robert Long*, a man at armes in *Calice*, a false witnes against *William Smyth* preacher, who grieued in conscience therefore, did immediately thereafter runne to the water and drowned himselfe. So heauie lay that sinne of

anno. 1552

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false witnesse bearing vpon his conscience. And what shall wee say of *George Brodway*, suborned by the counsell of *Calice*, about the same time to beare also false witnes against *Thomas Brookes*; Who therefore went about to cutte his owne throate for griefe of conscience, & when he was stayed to doe the same, and the knyfe taken from him, wherewith he had wounded himselfe, he became stark madde and so dyed. Sir *Iames Halles* also Knight, and iustice of the common place for griefe of conscience that he had denied the knowen trueth, and embraced papistrie, at *Queene Maries* commande, drowned himselfe. *Gregory* the seuenth (as witnesseth *Benno*) dyed desperatlie at *Salernum* of the onely griefe of conscience: vnto whome we may adde *Latimus*, *Eckins* and *Thomas Blaverus Scotus*, who all miserablie and in desperation ended this life for onley griefe of conscience, and who list to read moe of this number, and of all sortes both of men & women, he shall finde many that miserablie for griefe of conscience in desperation haue ended their liues in that booke which is intituled *Historia Tragica*.  
Therefore



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Therefore of all burthens , the griefe of conscience is the greatest.

But heere the question may bee demanded , why some of all these sortes of people do dispatch themselves of this life by so violent death, and some others againe do dye so quiet, or rather sencelessly without griefe? Question:

Answer, that the cause is in respecte that some feeling no sinne in this life, do departe like drunken and brutish swine and waken not out of their hellish sleepe vntill they be in hell, and the tormentes thereof fully sease vpon them . And the others being surcharged, & ouerburthened with sinne in this life , doe dye like barking madde dogges in desperation, without Christ and true repentance with *Kain, Iudas, Iulian* the Apostate and others. Of these two sortes there bee most of the firste in this last age , wherein Christ shal finde no faith at his comming but all persons for the moste parte, sleeping in that deadly security, wherein they shall assure themselves of peace , when as nothing is neerer hand vnto them then fearefull and endlesse torment of conscience, the worme whereof shall ne- Answer.  
Some are surcharged with the deadly sleepe of sinne vnto the end of their life and vthers overburthened with sinne are wakened in this life throghe the weight thereof.

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uer die, &c. Wherefore the Lord (as saith the Apostle) commandeth all such to waken and rise vp from the sleepe of sinne by faith, repentance, and holie conversation, that while they haue time, Christ may giue them light.

Thus much touching the griefe of conscience, both in the heathen and also in the prophane and superstitious professors of Religion.

**I**  
Examples  
of Gods  
children.  
Conscience  
is a wound  
which no  
Physitian  
can heale

**Iob. 3.**

Secondly, we finde that the torment of Conscience, euen in Gods children, & in such as are renewed with his spirit, is a griefe intollerable, and so greate, both in all Christs members, vpon whome it is layde, and also in their head Christ him selfe, that it is heauier then a thousand deaths, and yet no wayes to be relieued with any comforte, or solace vnder the heauen, as all other griefes may bee, bee they neuer so great: for example, let vs take *Iob*, who for the losse of all his substance, authoritie, children, and health of body, neuer shrunk nor quailed, vntil his vnhappy friends wounded his Conscience, and then he affirmed and complained, that God had fastened in him sharp arrowes, sette him as a butte to shute at,  
and



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and made him to possesse the finnes of his youth. So heauie a burthen was this wounded hearte and Conscience vnto him, who vnder all other troubles, was a patterne of al vprightnes and patience, neuer beeing moued therewith anie thinge at all (as it were) vntill this griefe did prick him.

The like may we also beholde in many others of the peculiar seruantes of God, as in *Dauid*, *Ezechias*, and *Jeremie*, who neuer did faint vnder any griefe, (notwithstanding of all their infinite troubles) but onely vnder the burthen of a wounded Conscience, wherwith when they felte themselves surcharged, they then were like Cranes chattering, Sparrows mourning, and Pellicants casting out fearefull cryes. So that with mourning like Doves, their hearts did cleaue to the duste, and their tounes to the roofe of their mouthes.

Yea, euen the Lorde our Maister and Sauour Christ, the true Image of his Father, God and man, when in his man-hood he felt this wound (his Godhead, lurking for the time) albeit vnder all his other troubles, which hee sustained for  
our

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our sakes he was couragious : yet heere-  
in feeling his fathers wrath for our ini-  
quities, the which for them he was to suf-  
taine, he complained, *that his soule was*  
*heauie vnto the death*, and earnestly  
prayed, *that if it were possible, that that*  
*cuppe should passe away from him*, which  
was so bitter, that while he prayed, hee  
sweate blood, and before he departed  
this life, pitefully cryed three seuerall  
times, that God had forsaken him.

What a  
griefe is a  
troubled  
Consciēce.

Of these premises, al men may vnder-  
stand, that are not a sleepe vnto euerla-  
sting condemnation, what a thing it is to  
possesse a grieued condemning heart, or  
troubled Consciēce. For there is no sick-  
nes, which is not vnto death, but Physick  
is provided, or may be had for it: no sore,  
but Chirurgerie wil aforde a salve for it.  
Friendship helpeth pouertie, hope of li-  
bertie imprisonment, sute and fauour re-  
couer men from banishment, and time  
and authority weares away reproch: But  
none of all these or any other thing in all  
the earth, can helpe a troubled condem-  
ning heart, or a wounded Consciēce.

Where by the contrary, the cōfort of a  
safe Consciēce & quyet heart or mind,  
doth



## OF CONSCIENCE.

doth helpe, heale, and cure, all the sor-  
rowes, griefes, and troubles, that can be-  
fall eyther men or women. For it is faith  
*Salomon, a continuall feaste*, and a perpe-  
tual solace in al the greatest troubles &  
griefes in the worlde: yea, this same be-  
ing in health and in good case, will vali-  
antly sustaine and easily beare all other  
troubles whatsoeuer: but if it be troubled  
nothing is able to sustaine that griefe.  
Studie therefore aboue all thinges, to a-  
voyde the testimonie of an euill Consci-  
ence, and to gette, keepe, and entertaine  
the precious iewell of a good Consciēce,  
which wil neuer suffer them who possesse  
the same to bee afrayde of euill tydings,  
(saith the Prophet) for if wee acknow-  
ledge and confesse our sinnes, he is faith-  
full and iust, who hath promised to for-  
giue vs them, and to cleanse vs from all  
vnrighousnes in the bloud of his Christ  
Let vs therefore iudge and condemne  
our selues, confesse our wickednes, & re-  
pent vs of our sins, that our owne hearts  
condemne vs not before the Lorde our  
God, for he will neuer, but both accuse vs  
and condemne vs, where our Conscien-  
ces

Pro. 15. 15

Prouerb.  
18. 14

1. Iohn. 7.

8.

Psal. 51. 1.

*ce*

## A DISCOURSE

ces doth the same.

<sup>s</sup>  
Conscience  
in hell  
what a  
griefe.

<sup>2</sup>  
Esa. 28. 15.  
Question.

Wee haue heere to marke, that if the griefe of Conscience bee so grieuous a thing to sustaine in this life, how much more grieuous is it to be suffered in hell, where there is no redemption, neither shall the torments thereof haue any end, where the worme thereof shall not dye, nor yet the fire that shall torment it euer be quenched. Take heede to this, all Epicures and Athiests, and who say that hell is made, and ordained to feare but children and young folkes withall, who yet might see if they were not blind, the beginning of hell in the troubled Conscience of the wicked euen in this life, to be a thing intollerable, and yet much more shall it be so in the life to come, in respect both that the torments thereof shall bee infinite degrees augmented, & likewise continue & indure for euer and without end. But some there be (saith the Prophet) y do ever put from the euil day of the Lord, and haue made a covenant with death, and a league with hell, that albeit a scourge runne ouer & passe through, it shall not come at them, in respect of falshood and vanitie, wherewith they



## OF CONSCIENCE.

they haue cloaked and hid themselves.

Answer, that such, albeit they haue no outward crosse nor trouble in this life, Answer

yet shall they neuer escape a wounded Conscience, eyther in this life or in that to come, for al the wicked the more they flee from it (although Gods children by faith and repentance doe often escape it the more it perseweth them, and once fearefully shall ouertake them, and accuse them of all their sins, convict them, condemne them, and execute Gods terrible iudgement of vnspeakeable torments against them, whereof there shall neuer be an ende. For this is that worme that neuer shall dyc, and the fire of hell which burneth with it, that neuer shalbe quenched.

Let vs therefore *Watch & pray,* 7 Ephes. 5. 14  
awake & stand vp from the dead while The conclusion of the firste parte.  
we haue time, who hytherto haue sleped and snored in all kinde of sinne and securitie, that we fall not into this gulfe of torment of a condemning heart & troubled spirit of euill Conscience, with the moste part of this vnhappie age, that neuer will awake and repent before they bee wakened with the tormentes of hels fire, in the miserable and endles life to come.

## A DISCOURSE

come. For it is about all things, the due-  
tie of all such as are carefull of their sal-  
uation, earnestly, and continually, with-  
out ceasing, to praye and call vnto the  
Lord, that hee in his Christe may giue vs  
light through faith, repentance and a-  
mendment of our euill spent liues, that  
we perrish not with the wicked worlde,  
which sleepeth securely in all kinde of  
mischiefe, without remorse or griefe of  
Conscience, and wil so do vnto the ende,  
to their intollerable punishment & mise-  
rie, that neuer shall haue ende.

### The Second parte.

**H**Auing declared in the first part of  
our diuision, the sence & meaning  
of the Apostle, what is the definition of  
conscience, as also what an intollerable  
burthen is the griefe of a wounded con-  
science.

Two due-  
ties of  
consciēce.

It resteth to speak of the proper due-  
ties and actions of Conscience, which are  
of two sortes: to wit, eyther to beare wit-  
nes and giue testimonie, or else to pro-  
nounce sentence & giue iudgement, ey-  
ther with vs or against vs.

It



## OF CONSCIENCE.

It beareth witnesse or giueth testimonie, when it telleth vs that a thinge was done or not done of vs. For the Apostle saith, that the Gentils did shew the effect of the law, written in their hearts, their Conscience also bearing witnes, & their thoughts accusing one another, or excusing. Rom. 2. 15.

And againe he sayth, that his reioicing is the testimonie of his Conscience, that in simplicity and godlie purenes, he had his conuersation in the world, &c. 2. Cor. 1. 12.  
Where we haue to consider, first of what things is it that conscience beareth witness: secondly in what maner: & thirdly how long. 3  
Three things to be considered.

As to the first, it beareth witness and record of all our thoughts, affections, & actions. For we vse to protest sometimes in our consciences, that we neuer thought something, let be to haue done it. It beareth also witnesse, what our wils and affections be in all matters, as I say the truth in Christe, I lye not, my Conscience bearing mee witness by the holie Ghoste. Thirdly, (Salomon saith) that often our heart or conscience knoweth, that we haue cursed others, that is spoke euill Rom. 9. 1.  
eccl. 7. 24

## A DISCOURSE

euill of them.

How con-  
science bea-  
reth wit-  
nes.

2 The maner that Conscience vscth in giuing testimonie or bearing witnesse standeth in two things. To wit, first, it obserueth and taketh knowledge of all thinges which wee doe. 2. It doeth tell vs inwardly and secreetely within our hearts of them all, and so it is like vnto a noater, who hath euer a pen in his hand to write and put into his protocoll, whatsoeuer is said or done by vs so long as we liue.

4  
Consciēce  
beareth  
witness for  
euer.

Thirdly, It beareth vs witness not for any short space of time, but for euer, both in this life, and in the life to come. So that when man dyeth, his Conscience dyeth not: yea, when we shall ryse againe, our Conscience shall come with vs to the barre of Gods iudgements, eyther to accuse vs, or excuse vs before God: for the Apostle sayeth, *Their Consciences bearing them witness, at the day when GOD shall iudge the secrets of men by Iesus Christ.*

Rom. 2. 15-  
16.

5  
Three  
thinges to  
be learned

Of this duety of conscience we learne three thinges: first, that there is a God; for seeing it beareth witness of all our thoghts, vnto the which neither man nor Angell is priuie. It must needs therefore  
be,



## OF CONSCIENCE

be that it is to God alone, (who seeth & knoweth all things) to whome our Conscience beareth witnesse and record. And therefore, let Athiests & godles persones barke against this as long as they list, yet haue they that within them, to wit, their conscience (the which will conuince and conuict them of the trueth of the Godhead, will they, or nill they, cyther in life or in death, and that he hath store of torments, and of infernall spirits to punnish them in the ende. For many Examples heereof, one shal serue. A certaine Skoffer and filthie gester, who this way gate for the mooste parte, all his liuing, was in a Tauerne, where manie were drinking, and there to play thee sporter, did mock the immortalitie of the soule, and offered to sell his soule (if any he had) to them that would giue him an kanne of wine for it. The which, when one of them that were drinking there had bought from him, & giuen to him the said Kanne of wine; Sathan in mans likenes, adioyning himselfe to the Table, with them that were in the Tauerne, and desired to haue the soule of this gester, of the same price of him that had bought it. The par

## A DISCOURSE

tie who first bought it, granted therevnto, and deliuered it vnto him as hee had it for another Kanne of wine. The which when hee had deliuered, hee tooke him from the Table both body and soule. See more of this historie, and of the like in *Historia tragica.*

The prouidence of God ouer all men: whose conscience will not suffer them to hide any thing from them.

2 We learne heerby, that God doth watch ouer all men by a speciall prouidence, in that he giueth to euery man a particular Conscience to bee his watchman & keeper, who in this poyute is like vnto a master of prison, who giueth to his prisoners keepers to watch the, & to bring them home againe into the prison if at anie time they purchase his licence to goe abroad for their particular turns: Euen so haue all men and women Consciences to follow them alwaies as at the heeles, and to dog them, and to trye all their thoughts, words, works, and affections, and to beare recorde, and true witnes thereof to God, and vnto their owne hearts. In such sorte, that although we may hide our turnes from men, yet is it certaine that our Conscience will shew them all before God.

Therefore, we ought to stand aboue all things



## OF CONSCIENCE.

things to do vprightly, and to follow the word of God in all that we doe, or leaue vndone (which is the onely square and rule of our Conscience) that the same may excuse vs, and not accuse vs before our God, for if our heart accuse vs to our God, God is farre greater then our harts to condemne vs, but if not, then we may haue bouldnes towards him.

Thirdly, we obserue heere the goodnes and loue of God toward vs, who setteth our Conscience to tell vs secretly when we doe amisse, to the ende that we should presently repent vs thereof and amend, that he may forgie vs, but if not that then oppenly it should accuse vs thereof before God, and at the barre of his iudgement seate, before al his Angels and saints in heauen. Wherefore wee should accuse and condemne our selues heere, that we be not accused and condemned there, if we desire to be saued in that great day of the Lord. For if we accuse and convict our selues when we doe amisse, with repentance & amendemēt, neither shall our conscience accuse vs to our God, nor he condemne vs for the euil which we haue committed. And thus

The goodnes of god in setting our conscience to tell vs what to doe, & vnder what paines.

1 Cor. 12.

13.

## A DISCOURSE

much touching the first duty of Conscience, which standeth in witness-bearing to God in accusing or excusing vs.

6  
The iudgement of Conscience what.  
As to the second action or worke of Conscience, it is to giue iudgement of things which we haue done, and so it is like a iudge, causing malefactours to be arraigned at the barre of his iudgement seate, and there to suffer for their demerites: yea, rather it is like a little God, sitting in the middle of mans heart, arraig-ning and iudging him in this life, as hee shal be arraigned and iudged for his offences at the tribunall seate of the Lord God in the day of iudgement. So that that iudgement giuen in this life by conscience, is nothing else but a certaine and sure fore-runner of the last iudgement to come.

7  
We are admonished of two things.  
1. Iob. 3. 20  
We are admonished heereby to take heede, that nothing past lye vpon vs, and that we charge not our Consciences in time comming with any matter whereof they may accuse vs. For if our conscience shall accuse vs, much more shall God condemne vs. Because he both seeth all our doings more clearely then doe our Consciences, & iudgeth more sincerely and



## OF CONSCIENCE.

and secretly then they can do vnto vs. Therefore wee ought to endeouour our selues with *Paull*, to say alwaies, that we knowe nothing by our selues in our life, that wee may euer stand in our Conscience without blame before him. 2. Cor. 4. 4.  
18.

Heere we must consider two things. 8  
First, the cause that maketh Conscience to giue iudgement, and secondly, the maner how it giueth it. The cause is the onely binder of Conscience, which is eyther proper or improper. Two things to be considered.

The proper binder of Conscience is Gods law, and the improper the lawes of Princes, hauing their authority of God to make such lawes for the good of their subiects, as ar agreeable with his law, or otherwaies, they cānot binde Conscience. 9  
Acts. 4.  
Rom. 13.  
Wher we learne that gods word is euer to be obeyed, albeit thereby we shoulde offend all men, and also loose our owne liues. Because wee are bound and obliged thereto in Conscience. 10  
Gods worde euer to be obeyed.

Secondly, wee must take heede, that that which we take in hand to doe, haue a warrant in our Conscience out of the word to doe it: & suchlike that which we leaue vndone, if we may leaue it vndone without the wound of conscience or not. 11  
What wee ought to take heede vnto.

## A DISCOURSE

We are  
bunde  
chiefly  
in consci  
ence to  
know two  
things.

12

As for example. The knowledge of God and his worde bindeth vs to learne it in Conscience, albeit the knowledge of humane science doth not the like, &c. For all persons are bound in Conscience to know God aright, & as he hath reuealed himselfe to the world in his word, and especially these two things. First, that all perfite righteousness and life euerlasting is to be obtained in Christ. And secondly, that the instruments to obtaine the same righteousness and life in Christ, is onely faith.

It followeth, to shew how Conscience giueth iudgement of all our doings: to wit, by a kind of reasoning, called a *Practicall* syllogisme, wherein Conscience useth two instruments in making of this reason, which are *minde* and *memorie*. For the *minde* telleth Conscience, what the Law of God is, and *memorie* bringeth to her *minde* all the particuler actions that men or women haue done or not done, that Conscience may determine and giue iudgement thereof. So that from these two, the Conscience reasoneth after this maner, as for example. The Conscience of a whoremonger reasoneth



## OF CONSCIENCE.

reasoneth thus with himselfe, saying. All whoremoungers shall be without in the serie lake, that burneth with fire & brim stone, which is the second death. But I am a whoremounger. Therefore, I shall be there.

So that hereby we see that the sinnes, and conpunctions of the heart, are sore and grieuous prickes vnto the minde & Conscience of man, yea, greater then any grieffe that can befall him. Although Sathan for a time doeth extenuate the same, as also corrupt affections doe oftentimes so ouercast this iudgement, that it perceaueth nothing for the space of a long time: as *Iosephs* bretheren, who were blinded this way for the space of two & and twentie yeares or thereby. *David* after his murther & adulterie, slept without remorse, vntill he was wakened by the Prophet *Nathan*, and the *Iewes*, who put Christ to death, vntill they were pricked with *Peters* sermon.

The effects of an accusing Consciēce are especially five, 1. *Grieffe*, 2. *Sadnes*, 3. *Feare*, 4. *Perturbation* of the whole man, & 5. *Desperation*.

This much of the accusing and con-  
demning

131

Gen. 42.

21.

2.Sam. 24

10.

Act. 1.37

14

Isa. 17.20

Pro. 28.1.

2.Cor. 1.10

12.11

Pro. 15.15.

Pro. 11.18.

## A DISCOURSE

demning Conscience. Now haue wee to speake of the Conscience excusing and absolving, which hath all things contrary to the accusing and condemning, as *Bouldnes, joy in the Holie-Ghoste, Confidence with assurance of mercy. For the righteous (saith Salomon) are bould as a Lyon.*

Pro. 15. 15

15

To doubt,  
erre, or do  
any thing  
against  
conscience  
is sinne.

Ro. 4. 23.  
& 14. 14.

12. 22. 2

Learne heere reader, that what is done of a doubting, or of an erroneous Conscience, or against Conscience is sinne. Because, *whatsoever is not of faith is sinne,* and to the vncleane all things are vncleane. Some did iudge fornication in the Primitiue Church not to bee sinne, wherein notwithstanding they sinned, in respect that their Conscience did erre in her iudgement: For euill remains euill, albeit Conscience saith the contrarie a thousand times. Moste men & women are sicke of this disease at this day, who thinke sin not to bee sinne in their Consciences, &c. What is done also against Conscience, is sin in the doer, albeit it erre and be deceaued.

16

What  
should be  
our war-  
rant in all  
our turnes

Of al this, let vs learne to obserue for a warrant to our Consciences, the onely command or contremand of Gods word in all our proceedings, and so shall wee walke



## OF CONSCIENCE.

walke surely when, wee make his worde the onely rule to our Conscience, & eschew mans inuentions, or good intentions: and likewise, when we vnderstande that it is a moste dangerous and deadly thing, to bee ignorant of the knowledge of Gods word, which maketh the life of man to abound : yea, to flow with the sea of al offences against God. And therefore, we shuld euer pray him of his great mercie, to graunt vs aboue al things, the true knowledge of him and of his sonne Iesus Christ, with the testimony of an excusing and vpright Conscience, ruled euer by the square of his worde, in the which, righteousness and eternall life is onely to be found through faith in Christ.

### The Thirde parte.

**T**wo parts of our diuisiō being spokē of. It followeth, thirdly to intreate of the kindes and sortes of Consciences, & in special, first of the Conscience of the regenerate, and of all Gods children: & secondly of that of the wicked.

For as to Conscience generally, it is eyther good or bad, and a good Conscience

I  
the diuisi.  
on touch  
ing the  
kindes &  
sortes of  
Conscien  
ces.

## A DISCOURSE

Conscience is either good or bad & the excellencie thereof consisteth in excusing.

1. Cor. 8. 9.  
12,

Act. 24. 16.

3  
Good conscience of two sortes by creatiō and regeneration.

4

ence is that which rightly and according to Gods word excuseth and comforteth. So that the excellencie of Conscience standeth in excusing & not in accusing, by reason that when we commit any sin, we giue then occasion immediatly thereafter, to our Conscience to accuse and condemne vs, wherby we doe wound & hurt the same : as testifieth the Apostle, saying, that the *Corinthians* did wound the Consciences of their weake brethren, when they vsed their liberty as an occasion of offence to them. And againe, hee calleth a good Conscience, a conscience without offence, or accusing of them that haue it.

Againe, a good Conscience is of two sortes: to wit, eyther good by creation, or else by regeneration. The conscience of our first parēts before their fall, was good onely by creation, & therefore could not but excuse them before God in all that they did in the estate of their innocency

A good Conscience regenerat, is that which being corrupt by nature, is renewed and purged by faith in the blood of Christe, in all such there is a conuersion or change needfull by grace, because  
by



## OF CONSCIENCE.

by nature all mens consciences through sinne are euill, and therefore become good onely by grace in Christ.

The instrumentall cause seruing to make this change is faith, which purifieth the hearts, and the meritorious cause, is the bloud of Christ, which doth purge consciences from dead works, to serue the living God.

A regenerat conscience hath two properties and staves. To wit, Christian liberty, and certaintie of saluation at all times, when she excuseth. Because that these two propertis haue not their place in the outward man, but in the heart, spirit or conscience.

I call Christian liberty, the holie and spiritual freedome purchased vnto vs by Christ, wherein the Apostle commandeth vs to *Standfast*, and not to bee entangled againe with the yoake of bondage, &c.

It hath three partes. As freedome from the iustification of the morrall law, and the fulfilling thereof. For hee who is a member of Christe, is not bound in Conscience, to bringe the

5  
Two cause  
of a good  
conscience

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Two pro-  
perties or  
staves of a  
regenerat  
conscience

7  
Christian  
liberty  
what.  
Gal 5.1.

8  
Christian  
liberty  
hath three  
parts.

perfitte  
righte-

## A DISCOURSE

righteousnes of the law in his owne person, for his iustification before God, but Chrijs.

9 He also who is a Christian, is free from the curse and condemnation of the law, for to such as are in Christ, *There is no condemnation, because he hath redeemed them from the curse of the Law.*  
Gal. 3. 13.

10 The second, is the freedome and libertie that we haue by Christe from the rigour of the law, which craueth perfite obedience, and condemneth all imperfection, *But sinne hath no more dominion ouer them that are in Christ, because they are not vnder the Law, or rigour thereof, but vnder grace, and in Christ.*  
Ro. 6. 14.  
Gal. 3. 13.  
Joh. 5. 3.

11 And therefore it is, that God accepteth our imperfite obedience, if it be sincere: yea, and as the Prophet sayth, *Will for worke, and Desire for Deed.*  
Mal. 3. 16.

12 The third is, freedome from the ceremoniall law. For after that the truth of all these shadowes is come wee are no more vnder the shadowes to keepe and obserue the same, which serued to the Iewes as a schoole-maister, to lead them to Christ, who was to come: but we ha-  
Gal. 3. 25.  
Eph. 2. 15  
Gal. 3. 14.  
uing the truth, to wit, Christ, who is alre adie



## OF CONSCIENCE.

die come, and hath suffered for vs in the flesh, haue no neede now of those types and shadowes of the ceremoniall law. Thus much concerning the first stay and property of a regenerate Conscience.

The second property or stay of a regenerate Conscience (especially when this same excuseth) is an infalliable certaintie of our sinnes to be pardoned, and of life euerlasting, by faith in Christ, wrought in our hearts by his spirit, whereof al the scriptures of God beare witness, that are heere vnder written, against that desperate doctrine of the Bishoppe of Rome, and Councell of Trent. As *Rom. 8. 15. Ephes. 4. 13. Math. 14. 31. Math. 21. 21. James. 1. 6. Rom. 4. 20.* Therefore it is, that *Basilius* demandeth this question: What is the property of faith? To the which demand he answereth, that it is to be one assured perswasion voyde of doubting & disputation.

Of these places of Scripture aboue mentioned, let euery christian make this reason, to wit: Euery one that beleeueth is the child of God: but I beleue: I therefore am the childe of God, and Gods children must needs be saued. Wherefore

13  
The second  
propertie  
or stay of a  
regenerat  
Conscience  
*Rom 8. 15.*  
*Ephes. 4. 13*  
*Math. 14,*  
*31. & 21.*  
*21.*  
*James 1. 6*  
*Ro. 8. 20.*

14

## A DISCOURSE

fore I cannot perish: against the doctrine of the papists, who will haue vs to doubt of our Saluation, against the Scriptures of God, and Articles of our beliefe, which doe command euery man & woman both to say, I beleeeue in God. In Iesus Christ his onely Son our Lord, who is God also equall with his father. In the holie Ghost, who is likewise God, & the third person of the Godhead. And finally, both to beleeeue remission of our sins and life euerlasting. But to doubt and to beleeeue, are words which importe contradiction. God commandeth vs to beleeeue the remission of our sinnes, & life euerlasting, through the merits & death of Christ, in the Articles of our beliefe: & the Pope and Councell of *Trent*, do accurse al such for presũptuous persons, as doe not continually doubt of the remission of their sinnes, certaintie of Saluation, and life eternall. And therefore, the conclusion is true, that the Pope is aduersary to Christ, and consequently, that same Antichrist, the mysterie of whose iniquitie beganne, euen in the dayes of the Apostles, and which hath so increased sensine, that in all the heads of Christian

1. Ioh 3. 2.



## OF CONSCIENCE.

stian religion, his doctrine is repugnant vnto Christs: And in this point, directlie to the verie Articles of our Christian beleefe.

It may bee demaunded heere by way of question, if one and the same conscience may not both accuse and excuse Gods children at any one time.

Answer, that it may: For else if our Conscience should not still accuse vs when wee doe amisse, then shoulde manie great sinnes assaulte vs at once, & make hauock of our soules. And therefore wee affirme, that it may both accuse vs, and excuse vs at one time, but not in one respect. For it excuseth vs, in that it assureth vs that our persons doe stand righteous before God, as cleathed and couered with the righteousnesse of Christ. And in respecte that we haue our desire, and doe endeuoure ourselues in the generall course of our whole life, to walke vprightlie and to please God. And yet neuerthelesse, of this it muste needs accuse vs perpetually for our particular slippes, and for the manifolde wants and imperfections that bee in all our good and beste actions, by reason where-

15  
Question.

Answer.

A good conscience may both accuse and excuse at one time, but not in one respect.

## A DISCOURSE

Luck, 17.

whereof it telleth vs, perpetually in our  
eare, that we are vnprofitable seruants.

Thus much of a good Conscience.

16  
Euill con-  
science  
what and  
why it is so  
called.

. Now followeth an euill Conscience,  
which is so called, partly, because it is  
corrupted by originall sinne, and partly  
by reason it is euill, that is, troublesome  
and painefull to our sence and feeling,  
as are vnto vs all other sorrowes, cala-  
mities or miseries whatsoeuer, which for  
this same cause are called likewise euils.

17  
The pro-  
pertie of  
an euill cō  
science is  
euer to ac-  
cuse.

Luke. 5-8.

The propirtie of it is euer to accuse &  
condemne; and thereby to make them  
that haue it, affrayde of the presence of  
God, and to flee from him as from their  
emie. Example in our first parents &  
in *Peter*, who falling downe at Christes  
knees besought him to goe from him, in  
respect his Conscience toulde him, and  
accused him that he was a sinfull man.

18  
Euill con-  
science is  
ether dead  
or waking.

Euill Conscience is eyther dead or  
waking and stirring, the dead Consci-  
ence is that which (albeit it can but ac-  
cuse) lyeth commonly quyet, accusing  
little or nothing at all, and that for di-  
uers causes: to witte, want of reason,  
strength and force of wicked and flesh-  
ly affections, & ignorance of Gods word  
and



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and reuealed will.

A dead Conscience hath two properties: the first is, to be benūmed, vnfeeling or dosened, as that of *Iosephs* brethren, for the space of two and twentie yeares, or thereby. This raigneth in drowfie Protestants, luke-warne Gospellers, and ciuill honest persons, who liue without common slander to the gospel. Of this kinde of Conscience let vs take heede. For it is like to a wilde beast, who so long as it lyeth a sleepe troubleth nothing, but when it awaks, flyeth into mens faces and deuoureth them. This is it that the Poets did call the *Furies*, because it pursueth them that haue it, vnto death and desperation.

The second property of a dead Conscience is, to be seared or burnt (as the Apostle saith) *with an hotte yron*: that is, the Conscience which is past all feeling in this life, and is neuer mooued with the remorse of sin thorowly, or to any purpose. And this is in the onely obstinate wicked, and such as are giuen vp into a reprobate minde. This shall be awakened at the day of death and last iudgement by God, to accuse and condemne

D

them

19

A dead  
conscience  
hath two  
proper-  
ties.  
Gen. 44.  
16.

20

Rom. 2. 15

## A DISCOURSE

them that haue it, whē the bookes of the dead, both of the great and small shalbe opened.

**21**  
A stirring  
conscience  
hath foure  
degrees.  
1 Accuseth  
for euill do-  
ing.

Lastly, a stirring euill Conscience doth eyther accuse or excuse, & it hath foure seuerall degrees or differences. The first that accuseth a man for doing euill, is an euill conscience, albeit by occasion or accident, it serueth to bee a preparation to grace by the goodnes of God: As the needle that draweth the thred through the cloath, by making a hole in the cloath, serueth to sowe it also. For to accuse, is euer a defect, and was not in man by creation. And therefore is one of the foure degrees of an euill conscience.

**22**  
2. accuseth  
for well  
doing.

The second, is that which accuseth for well doing, and is in Idolaters, as not to say or goe to Masse, accuseth a Papist.

**23**  
3. Excuseth  
euill doing

The third, is that which excuseth euill & doing, is found likewise in Idolaters, who when they slay and burne the Godly, their eroneous conscience excuseth them.

**24**  
4 Excuseth  
wel doing  
in vnrege-  
nerate per-  
sons.

The fourth and last, excuseth well doing in carnal and vnregenerate persons, Example in *Abimeleck*, not committing adulterie with *Abrahams* wife, which was



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was a thing morallie good in it selfe, but not in the vnregenerate person, whose ciuill good workes are nothing else but glistering finnes, and this Conscience is but *Carnall* and not regenerate. For as to Ro, 14, 14, the cleane, by faith al things are cleane. So to the vncleane that want faith nothing is cleane nor acceptable in Gods sight, how good soeuer otherwaies the same be morally, because the persō who lacketh faith in Christ, is vncleane and therefore cannot please God.

Let vs therfore drawe neere vnto our God, with true and penitent hearts, in assurance of faith (as saith the Apostle) being voyde of an euill conscience, and washed in our bodies with pure water.

For it is *by faith that the iuste doe liue*, the which wee must follow vnto the conseruation of our soule, that all our workes may be acceptable to our God through Christ our Lord.

e 5  
Heb 10, 22  
Act. 13, 9,  
Heb, 10,  
38, 39,

### The Fourth parte.

**F**Or as much as hytherto wee haue shewed both what consciēce is, what the troubles thereof are? As likewise,

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what are both the actions and the kinds thereof. It remaineth fourthly, & lastlie, to shew what is mans duety concerning Conscience, how hee may preuent the troubles thereof, and being troubled in his heart and spirit, how he may relecue his conscience, and exoner the same of all the troubles and wounds wherewith it may be griued in this life.

<sup>2</sup> Mans duety is two  
fold con-  
cerning  
conscience  
<sup>2</sup> Mans first duety is in this behalfe, to purchase and get a good conscience, for by nature (seeing we are all the children of wrath) we haue it not. And his second duety is to keepe it well when he hath gotten it.

<sup>3</sup> three thing  
are neede-  
full  
<sup>3</sup> For the getting of a good conscience, three things are needefull: to wit, a preparation to it. Secondly, the application of the remedy, and thirdly, prepared the reformation of it.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. 3. 10,  
Preparati-  
on what.  
<sup>6</sup> The preparation to it requireth the knowledge of the law, that thereby wee may vnderstand what is good or euill. 2. The iudiciall sentence therof, which telleth vs, that the curse of God is due to all men for euery sinne: 3. An earnest examination of our Conscience by the law, that thereby wee may perceauce and vnderstand



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vnderstand what is our estate before God, and vpon this duety, the Prophets doe stand very much. For heereby it is, that we come to the knowledge of our wretchednes & miserable estate before our God. Wherefore, (Ieremie saith) *Let vs search and trye our waies, and turne againe vnto the lord: & Zephaniah, Gather your selues euen gather you, O nation, not worthy to be loved, before the decree come forth, and yee bee as chaffe which passeth in a day, and before the fierce wrath of the Lord come vpon you, &c. For the law is a yoke (saith the Apostle) That neither we nor our fathers, we are able to beare.*

Lamen. 3.

40.

Zepha, 2, 1

Act. 15. 10

Hereby all men and women may easily see, that by nature we are most miserable, because we are vnable in our own default to doe the works of the Law, & fulfill that obedience, which we owe of duetie to our God, and that therefore we abide naturallie accursed. This our miserable estate, when wee know it by the law, it bringeth forth in vs a sorrow and griefe, in respect of the knowledge of the punishment for sin, arising of the knowledge of our duties towards God, contained in the lawe, & of our inability to performe the same. And thus much con-

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concerning our preparation to obtaine  
and get a good Conscience.

6

The appli-  
cation of  
the reme-  
dy.

Rom, 3. 20

Rom, 10. 4

1, Cor, 1. 3,

Gal. 3. 24,

2 The application or applying of the  
remedy whereby to heale our sorrow &  
griefe conceiued of our wretched estate,  
by the knowledge of the law (which is  
onely the bloud and merites of Christe,  
who for vs in his Conscience felte Gods  
wrath, and the punishments of all our  
sinnes) requireth two things, that is, the  
preaching of the gospell and faith. For  
the gospell is the hand of God the father,  
offering vnto vs grace & mercy in christ.  
And faith is our hand, whereby wee lay  
holde on him, and receaue him with all  
his benefits. For as by the law commeth  
the knowledge of sinne, so is the righte-  
ousnes of God, by faith in Iesus Christe,  
made manifest without the law, vnto al,  
and vpon all that belecue. For hee is the  
ende of the Law, for righteousness to e-  
uery one that belecueth: and the ende of  
the law is, to iustifie them that obserue it  
Wherefore, Christ hauing fulfilled it for  
vs, is made our righteousness, wisdom, sancti-  
fication & redemption. This much of the ap-  
plication of the remedy against the sor-  
row, & desperation arising of the know-  
ledge



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ledge of our miserable estate by nature,  
when wee doe beholde the same in the  
and mirrour of the law.

Where wee haue to learne ,that two  
things are most needefull for vs who de- 7  
two things  
sire truly to enioy and possesse this reue- needefull  
dy . The first is seriously to humble our to appre-  
selues before God for all our wants, and hende and  
especially for such as lye open in our Cō- keepe  
science, accusing and condemning of our Christ.  
selues before his holie maiestie . For so  
shall we put Conscience out of office, &  
performe that work our selues in this life  
which Conscience would performe to  
our eternal damnatiō in the life to come  
*For if we iudge our selues (saith the Apostle)*  
*we shal not be iudged. 2.* We must oftē with  
grones and earnest prayers, humble be-  
seech the Lord for Christs sake, to for-  
giue vs our sins, that so wee may be sure  
of his fauour, and forgiuenes of them all.  
And because that this humiliation stan-  
ding in these two poyntes, there are ex-  
cellent and sure promises made by God  
vnto vs of grace, & life euerlasting in his  
worde (for Salomon saith) *Hee that hideth* Pro. 28, 13.  
*his sinnes shall not prosper : but hee that con-*  
*fesseth and forsaketh them shall haue mercie.*

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1. Ioh. 1. 9. *and if wee acknowledge and confesse our sinnes (saith Iohn) God is faithfull and iust to forgiue vs them, and wash them al away from vs, with the bloud of his christ. For Gabriell the Angell said vnto the virgin Mary, (that her sonne) Christs name, should be called Iesus. Because hee should saue his people from their sinnes. Wherefore it followeth, that there is no condemnation to them that are and beleue in him, if they walke not after the flesh, but after the spirit. To all which persons, ariseth a certainty of Saluation. And consequently, a reformation of conscience, which is wrought in all such persons by the holie ghoste, when the same ceaseth to accuse and terrifie them, and beginneth to excuse them, and to testifie vnto them, that they are the children of God. The which thinge neuer faileth to anie that doe seriousslie humble themselves, and by earnest prayer craue mercie and pardon of their sinnes at Gods hands for Christs sake.*

8

The riches worldlie pleasures, I would to God there-  
 & pleasures fore, that the greatest part of this vnhap-  
 of the py age, would be as careful to sute and  
 faithfull, & seeke for the same, as they are to hunte  
 which after



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after the transitory pleasures of this corruptible flesh: as honors, riches, & other pleasures worldly, which wil quickly depart, but this shall ever abide as a continual and pleasant feast, both heere & in the world to come. And thus much concerning mans firste duetic, against the getting of a good conscience. they shuld  
ever seeke  
for, is a  
good con-  
science.  
Pro. 15. 15.

Astouching mans second duety concerning Consciēce, it is to keepe it good when he hath so gotten it, & to preuent the troubles therof by all meanes possible. For it is no lesse vertue to keepe a good Conscience then to get it. 9  
Mans se-  
cond due-  
ty concer-  
ning con-  
science.

In keeping of a good Conscience, aboute all things, three things are to be avoyded. To wit, ignorance, vnmortified affections, and worldly lustes. As to the first, *Salomon* affirmeth, that the minde cannot bee good, that is the Conscience of him that is without knowledge: yea it is said, cap 17. 2. Kings, that the people that dwelt in *Samaria*, were deuoured of Lyons and wilde beastes, because they knew not the manner of the God of the Land. And againe, the Prophete *David* saith, that such as doe not knowe the voice of the Lorde, and his will and wayes, 10  
Three  
things to  
be avoyd-  
ed  
1. ig-nor-  
ance.  
Pro. 19. 2.  
2, Kings  
17, 26,  
Psal, 95.  
10,

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wayes, doe erre in heart and soule, neuer enter into the Lords rest. Likewise Christ himselfe telleth vs, that they that knowe not the scriptures, doe but erre & goe astray. And againe, that this is the cōdemnatiō of the world, that the light of Gods will declared in Christ being come into the world: men notwithstanding loue rather darknes, and to perish therein, then the light, and to be saued thereby. And therefore saith the Apostle, *as they regarded not to knowe GOD, euen so GOD deliuered them vp into a reprobate minde, to doe those things which are not conuenient, and whereby they become full of vnrightheousnes.* Yea, ignorance (saith Chrysostome) is the worke of the diuils inspiratiō, who would not haue vs to see the treasure, least wee should possesse the riches. And that this is the cause of all euill, that the scriptures hath not knowen.

Math, 22,  
29,  
Rom, 1, 28

Chrysost.

Of these premisses we see how needful it is aboue all things, for al that wil keep a good Cōscience, to learn the knowledge of Gods word, the ignorance wherof begetteth & breedeth in man & woman, a loathsome sea of all euils, whereby their miserable Consciences are drowned in a  
loathsome



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loathſom ſink of all wretched miſery vn-  
to the day of the irDeath, when the Lord  
ſhal fearefully in his iuſtice wakē them,  
to their perpetual ſhame and confuſion.

Secondly, it is needefull to be vtterly  
diſpleaſed alwaies with the ſinful affecti-  
ons of our fleſh. As with wrath, anger, en-  
vie, malice, wandering luſtes, & ſuchlike  
other vnhappy fruits of our wretched &  
corrupt nature. And therefore continu-  
ally to crye with the Apoſtle. *O wretched  
man that I am, who ſhal deliuer me from the bo-  
dy of this death, or from this fleſhlie lump  
of ſinne and death, which by nature eue-  
rie one of vs do carry about with vs. So  
that this way in our mind at the leaſt, we  
may euer ſerue the law of god, & ſo crop  
& ſnedde ſinne in vs, that it come neuer  
to ſeede, maturity, and ful perfection, to  
raigne in vs and rule ouer vs aboue the  
Spirite.*

I I

Let vs bee  
diſpleaſed  
with ſinne  
and the  
luſtes of  
the fleſhe.

Rom, 7, 25

Thirdly, as to worldly pleaſures and  
honours of this life, let vs euer reſpecte  
them all as dunge in reſpecte of Chriſt,  
the benefites which wee receaue by him  
and the preſeruatiō of a good Conſci-  
ence. The which wee ought perpetu-  
allie to eſteeme and thinke off, as of  
our

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of our Paradise, and of the lustes of our fleshe, and pleasures of the world, as of the forbidden fruite, if we desire to liue for euer with perpetuall ioy in our soule and conscience, both in this life and in that to come through Christ. And thus much touching the keeping of a good conscience when it is gotten.

13  
The remedies of a troubled conscience.

As to the remedies of a troubled hart and griued Conscience, which of al others, when it rageth is the greatest, wee say that the same must be sought for out of the word, and exampels of the faithfull as of *Iob*, *Jeremy*, *Ezekiah*, *Dauid*, & also of Christ himselfe, who felt the extremest anguish that euer cyther was, is, or yet shall be, and notwithstanding perished not there through, because they dispayred not therein, but trusted stil in God, and therefore were deliuered.

2 Such must vnderstand as are troubled in Conscience, that the way to heauen, is euen to goe thither by hell.

They that go to heauen, must saile by hell.

3 Let all such as are in this trouble, haue recourse to godly pastours, who may and will giue them comfort out of the worde.

4 Let them confer with such as haue felt



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felt the like trouble, who will shew them how they got comforte therein: and that first of all, it is necessary for the to learne and vnderstand fve things 1. To knowe and confesse their sins. 2. To feele them forgiuen in Christ. 3. To looke for power of him to crucifie the same. 4. To lay hold vpon iustification by his resurrection. 5. To looke for strength of him only to proceede to further sanctification & holines of life euē to the end: al the which things they shall finde promised by God in his word, & beleued and put in practise by the faithful, preached & set down by the Prophets, as at what time soeuer a sinner doth repent from the bottome of his heart, the Lord will put away all his iniquities, &c.

And last of all, let them that bee thus troubled, say with the Prophete. *Lord, because there is mercie with thee, that thou mayest be feared, I will wait vpon thee, as the eye of the seruant waiteth vpon the hand of his Master, and I will condemne my selfe of folly, and say, o my soule, why art thou so heavy? why art thou cast downe within me? still trust in the Lord for he is thy health, & thy saluation, & therefore thou wilt trust in him, albeit he should slay thee.*

They that sure and seeke for these  
meanes

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means in the trouble of ther conscience, with earnest prayer, and feruent supplications vnto his holy maiesty in the name of his Christ, shall neuer but finde comforte to their wearied soules, and a full remedie to their wounded Consciences in the ende.

Question.

Last of all, (before I conclude) this questiō may be moued. That if the troubles of conscience be so feareful a thing, & a quyet conscience so excellent a treasure, why then is it that so manie are so carefull to preuent the troubles of the bodie, and so few carefull for the troubles of their soules and consciences. For to provid remedies for povertie, & Physick for sicknes, we doe perceauē few to be slack or slouthfull, and yet to provide any remedy in time for a sick & wounded Conscience, we see few so carefull as will loose an houres sleepe. Example hereof wee may perceauē in *Iosephs* brethren, who slept with wounded and guiltie consciences securely, for the space of many yeares, albeit they were very carefull so soone as they were punished with famine, to provide a hasty remedy therefore, but regarded not the sin committed



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ted against *Ioseph*, & guiltines of their consciences, vntill the Lord wakened them to their griefe . So did *Daniel* forget his murther and adulterie for a years space, and ay & while the Lord wakened him vp to repentance by his Prophet *Nathan*. For answer to this question, I say, that it is because we desire to colour our sinnes and hyde the same, as did our first parēts vntill God himselfe did reueale them, & this chiefly doe all *Adams* children that are not renewed by Christ, and so shal all such doe, as haue a sleeping and carelesse Conscience (as haue moste men at this day) vntill they be eyther wakend vp by gods Prophets, and his word to try their consciences, or else by God himselfe, by some inwarde griefe or outward trouble before their death, or in death to their endles griefe, or then after death to their euerlasting damnation.

Answer.

Let vs therefore know, what thinge Conscience is in time. What are the torments of an euill Conscience, what are the exercises or workes of Conscience. What are the kinds & sortes of Consciences: and lastly, what are mens dueties concerning

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concerning conscience, and how he may  
get a good Conscience, preserve the  
same when it is gotten, and prevent the  
troubles thereof, and being troubled, af-  
ter what manner he may be releived out  
of the troubles of it. All the which things  
are expressely to be found in Gods word:  
and therefore, let vs endeavour our selues  
seriously with earnest prayer, to seeke  
them and search them out of the same.  
That we may through patience & Com-  
fort thereof, conceaue an assured hope  
(with the testimony of an excusing con-  
science, squared rightly with the rule of  
the word, of euerlasting life, through Je-  
sus Christ our Lord, To whome be all  
honour, prayse and glory, for  
euer. Amen.

FINIS.

*M. John Howesoun.*





